

## SECTION 3

# Waste Reduction Element

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### Goal of This Planning Element:

*To ensure, at a minimum, from a 1992 baseline year, a 25 percent per capita reduction of the amount of solid waste being received at disposal facilities by promotion of source reduction, reuse, composting, recycling, and other waste reduction programs today and in the future, thereby maintaining and enhancing the quality of life of the citizens of the area.*

This section provides information on the current waste reduction programs (both public and private) in the City of Atlanta. Each program is inventoried and assessed to determine its effectiveness in helping to meet the State's waste-reduction goal. This section also includes needs and goals for waste reduction for the 10-year planning period.

The Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act set forth the State's waste reduction goal, requiring a 25 percent per capita reduction rate in the amount of solid waste being disposed, from a 1992 baseline year. Since 1992, the City of Atlanta has achieved an 11 percent decrease in the per capita disposal of its solid waste, and has not met the State's waste reduction goal. In analyzing the amount of solid waste disposed from just the City of Atlanta collections, the per capita disposal reduction from 1992 is 25 percent, which meets the State's reduction goal. If sludge disposal were removed from the analysis, the per capita reduction increases to 36 percent. Therefore, the 11 percent per capita reduction is most likely impacted by commercial private waste disposal and C&D debris. This indicates a need for the City to evaluate current commercial recycling programs and research the potential for C&D debris recycling programs and facilities. Other waste reduction, collection, disposal, and education and public involvement programs will help the City meet or exceed the 25 percent reduction goal for the planning period. Table 3-1 compares the waste generation rates between 1992 and 2003.

TABLE 3-1  
Municipal Solid Waste Disposal Rates for the City of Atlanta (1992 vs. 2003)

	1992	2003	Percent Reduction from 1992 (%)
<b>Waste Disposal Rate</b> (lbs/capita/day)	9.77	8.68	<b>11</b>
<b>Waste Disposal Rate for City of Atlanta Collections Only</b> <b>(Does not include Private Haulers)</b> (lbs/capita/day)	4.04	3.03	<b>25</b>
<b>Waste Disposal Rate for City of Atlanta Collections Only</b> <b>and Not Including Sludge</b> <b>(Does not include Private Haulers)</b> (lbs/capita/day)	3.80	2.43	<b>36</b>

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## 3.1 Source Reduction

Source reduction of solid waste is any action taken to prevent the generation of the waste in the first place. It can include reducing the amount of solid waste generated at the source; redesigning products or packaging with less material; promoting behavioral changes in the use of materials; or increasing the durability and reusability of materials to result in longer-lasting products. Source reduction is fundamentally different from the other elements of the solid waste hierarchy. Recycling and disposal options all come into play after goods have been used. Source reduction, in contrast, occurs before materials have been identified as “waste.”

### 3.1.1 Education Program (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta has an educational source-reduction program that promotes “buying smart,” buying in bulk, buying items with less packaging, and buying more durable goods, to help reduce the source of solid waste generation. Over the past 5 years, the City has promoted source reduction through the following activities:

- **Backyard Composting** – At certain events in the past, the City has provided backyard composting kits, which included an instructional book, chicken wire, posts, and bacterial starter to City residents. The City also assisted community gardening centers with composting.
- **Educational Material** – The City has promoted source reduction through a variety of flyers, newsletters, and brochures. The material is disseminated by canvassing neighborhoods during regular collection routes, attendance at neighborhood meetings and community events, bi-annual recycling and DPW newsletters, presentations during “Public Works Week” at City Hall and the City of Atlanta’s March of Dimes campaign, and presentations at City schools and parent-teacher organization meetings. A few examples of these materials are presented in Appendix A.
- **Shopping Bags** – The City has provided net-like reusable shopping bags for residents to use at grocery stores or other shops to help reduce the disposal of shopping bags.
- **Puppet Shows** – Educational puppet shows have been provided to City schools and communities to promote source reduction. The City utilized its recycling contractor Dreamsan, Inc., to conduct the educational events. In 2004, more than 7 shows were provided to schools in the City.

### 3.1.2 Assessment of Source Reduction Programs

The City believes that education, awareness, and marketing campaigns are the main components in promoting source reduction of solid waste. The City’s current source reduction programs, however, are not adequate. In the past, these programs were conducted superficially just to convey the message on source reduction instead of through a direct public involvement campaign. Since the City did not meet the State’s 25 percent reduction goal, the City must continue its current educational programs and add new programs, to increase the City’s per capita reduction rate (currently at 11 percent). Public input, provided at several public meetings held for the solid waste management planning

process in 2004 and the beginning of 2005, indicated a desire for more education, public outreach, and marketing of source reduction and recycling information.

## 3.2 Reuse/Recovery

The concept behind reuse/recovery of items before they become solid waste is to reuse items by repairing them, donating them to charity and community groups, or selling them, all of which reduces waste. Reusing products, when possible, is even better than recycling, because the item does not need to be reprocessed before it can be used again. Reusing items delays or avoids that item's entry into the waste collection and disposal system. The following sections list reuse/recovery programs in the City of Atlanta and provide an assessment on the effect of those programs in the City of Atlanta.

### 3.2.1 Reuse/Recovery Organizations (Existing Program)

Several non-profit and for-profit organizations collect or accept items for reuse. These organizations reuse donated items by either giving them back to the community at no charge, or by selling them at lower prices.

Table 3-2 provides a list of the major organizations in the City of Atlanta that accept or collect donations of reusable materials.

TABLE 3-2  
Major Organizations in the City of Atlanta that Accept Reusable Materials

Agency	Address/Phone Number	Items Accepted	Items Not Accepted	Pickup/ Drop-off Service
Atlanta Union Mission	P.O. Box 1807 Atlanta, Georgia 30301 (404) 588-4004	Clothing and accessories, furniture, appliances, tools, bicycles, toys, grills, beds, clean mattresses, linen, computers, stereo equipment, music, TVs, VCRs, DVD players, lighting, housewares, office equipment, filing cabinets, lawn equipment, household decorations, books, recyclable metals, non-perishable foods, medical supplies, automobiles (working), boats, industrial equipment, farm equipment	Tires, broken or tempered glass, paint, pianos or organs not in good working order, fiberglass bath tubs and showers, porcelain commodes and sinks, waterbeds, irreparable pressboard furniture, non-working plastic shelled TVs, console stereos, mobile homes, wet or soiled clothing, and wet, soiled, ripped, or torn upholstery pieces or bedding.	Both
Goodwill Industries	2201 Glenwood Ave. SE Atlanta, GA 30316 (404) 486-8400	All household goods and clothing	Appliances	Drop-off service only
Salvation Army	740 Marietta St. NW Atlanta, GA 30318 (404) 522-9785	All household goods and clothing, appliances, gently used vehicles	Tires or building supplies	Both

TABLE 3-2  
Major Organizations in the City of Atlanta that Accept Reusable Materials

Agency	Address/Phone Number	Items Accepted	Items Not Accepted	Pickup/ Drop-off Service
National Kidney Foundation	2951 Flowers Rd, South, Suite 211 Atlanta, GA 30341 (800) 488-CARS	Cars, vans, trucks, or boats	N/A	Pickup service only
Atlanta Community Tool Bank	55 Ormond St. Atlanta, GA 30315 (404) 880-0054	Usable tools and building materials, such as fixtures, paint, doors, sinks, commodes, lumber, etc.	N/A	Both
Metro Atlanta Furniture Bank	538 Permalume Pl. NW Atlanta, GA 30318 (404) 355-8530	Furniture and household goods. Provides eviction protection service, which includes free pickup and storage for 60 days.	N/A	Both

Source: <http://georgia.earth911.org/usa/master.asp>

Dell Computers, Inc., also works with the City of Atlanta and Georgia State University in collecting old or used computers once a year for reuse and recycling. The Dell Recycling National Tour is designed to educate consumers that “No Computer Should Go to Waste.” While computers are safe to use, they do contain some environmentally sensitive materials that should not go into landfills. More than 98 percent of a computer can be recycled or reused. In the City of Atlanta, Dell collected 74 tons of used computers and computer parts in 2004.

Dell offers U.S. consumers and businesses the ability to recycle used computers and computer hardware directly through their company. Dell also allows consumers and businesses to donate computers and computer hardware to help disabled and economically disadvantaged children and adults. For additional information on the Dell Recycling and Donation Programs, please visit Dell’s website at [http://www1.us.dell.com/content/topics/segtopic.aspx/dell\\_recycling?c=us&cs=19&l=en&s=dhs](http://www1.us.dell.com/content/topics/segtopic.aspx/dell_recycling?c=us&cs=19&l=en&s=dhs).

### 3.2.2 Waste Audits (Existing Program)

Twenty-three Atlanta businesses were surveyed as part of an assessment of commercial solid waste collection in the City. Authors of the Commercial Solid Waste Assessment Report (2004) contacted five solid waste haulers: United Waste Services, BFI, Waste Management Inc, Rock-Tenn Recycling, and American Recycling Company. In addition to providing residential and commercial waste collection services as well as some recycling services, each hauler reported that they provide commercial customers with waste audits upon request. These audits help the customer identify items that can be recycled, thereby reducing the amount and cost of solid waste disposal.

Waste audits involve conducting a random sampling of waste to determine what types of items are being thrown away and whether any of these items can be reused, recycled, or otherwise diverted from the waste stream. Waste audits involve sorting through trash to

determine the composition and quantities of waste being generated. Trash is collected from a facility and labeled to identify the source of the waste (kitchen, offices, etc.). The waste is then sorted in a well-ventilated location using proper health and safety procedures. Each bag of waste is sorted and weighed to provide an overall summation of each type of waste (i.e., food waste, glass, office paper, plastics, metal). Data for each bag are entered into a database and then analyzed to determine the overall composition of the waste stream. Waste audits can be used to measure the effectiveness of existing waste management systems, identify opportunities for improving waste management systems and strategies, and collect baseline data for measuring the effectiveness of waste management and minimization.

### 3.2.3 Waste Exchanges (Existing Program)

Several organizations can provide waste exchange services to residents and businesses in Atlanta. Waste exchange services provide current listings, catalogs, or classified ads of items that can be exchanged, recycled, or reused by companies and individuals. Items that can be exchanged include construction and building materials, equipment, metal and metal sludges, oils and waxes, chemicals, plastic and rubber, solvents, textiles and leather, and wood and paper. The Georgia EPD and the Georgia DCA websites provide links to waste exchange programs. Table 3-3 provides a list of waste exchange organizations that the City could utilize.

TABLE 3-3  
Waste Exchange Organizations

Name	Website Address	Description
Southern Waste Information Exchange (SWIX)	<a href="http://www.electronicexchange.org">http://www.electronicexchange.org</a>	Non-profit organization that operates a website and publishes a catalog. Serves as a marketplace where reused items can be bought, sold, and traded.
Recycler's World	<a href="http://www.recycle.net/recycle/index.htm">http://www.recycle.net/recycle/index.htm</a>	Trading site for recyclable commodities, used materials, and collectible items. Also lists trade associations, publications, and online market prices.
Global Recycling Net	<a href="http://grn.com">http://grn.com</a>	Worldwide waste collection, disposal, and recycling marketplace.
Recycle America	<a href="http://www.recycleamerica.com">http://www.recycleamerica.com</a>	Commercial website maintained by Waste Management Inc. for post-industrial scrap of all kinds.

Sources:

Georgia EPD: [http://www.ganet.org/dnr/p2ad/rec\\_links.html](http://www.ganet.org/dnr/p2ad/rec_links.html)

Georgia DCA: <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/environmental/recycling/options.html>

### 3.2.4 Assessment of Reuse/Recovery Programs

#### 3.2.4.1 Reuse/Recovery Organizations

Although many organizations accept reusable items, these programs are underutilized in Atlanta. In the future, the City will partner with these organizations and promote their capabilities to the public on reuse opportunities. Information on non-profit and for-profit

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reuse organizations in the City will be collected in a database for the “Don’t Dispose – Donate” Program, which is discussed in Section 3.5.2. 1, Don’t Dispose--Donate.

The City will continue its partnership with Dell Computers to continue the Dell Recycling Tour. Although the past recycling tour was successful, Dell Computers expressed a desire for better coordination with the City on the recycling event. The City also currently offers a drop-off center for “E-Waste” at the William B. Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant. The types of “E-Waste” accepted include cell phones, computers, monitors, electronics, televisions, and stereos. More information on this program is provided in Section 3.3.3, Drop-Off Centers.

#### **3.2.4.2 Waste Audits**

Although the City does not conduct waste audits, it will promote the use of waste audits by private waste haulers. Waste audits can help the customer identify recyclable items, thereby reducing the amount and cost of solid waste disposed.

#### **3.2.4.3 Waste Exchanges**

The use of waste exchanges also is underutilized by Atlanta, and the information on these waste exchanges is not advertised or promoted well to the residents of the City. Waste exchange services reduce waste being disposed to a landfill by helping companies and individuals to exchange, recycle, or reuse items. The City will consider posting information on these organizations on the City’s website and including the information in educational outreach programs.

The City of Atlanta also may consider sponsoring and leading a metro Atlanta waste exchange for the institutional sector. This program is discussed in more detail in Section 3.5.2.2, Metro Atlanta Waste Exchange.

### **3.3 Recycling**

Recycling is any process by which materials that would otherwise become solid waste are collected, separated, or processed, and reused or returned to use in the form of raw materials or products. The following subsections present the available recycling programs followed by the City of Atlanta and private companies.

#### **3.3.1 Residential Curbside Collection Program (Existing Program)**

The City currently contracts with Dreamsans, Inc. (Dreamsans) to provide weekly, residential curbside collection of recyclable materials. Dreamsans provides curbside recycling service to approximately 87,000 single-family residents. The contract is for 1 year, with up to 4 renewals. This annual renewal process enables the City to ensure that the recycling services provided to residents are continuously updated to meet the residents’ needs. In 2003, approximately 6,985 tons of residential solid waste were recycled. The items currently accepted for recycling are newspaper, office paper, mixed paper, junk mail, aluminum and metal cans, glass, plastic, phone books, and boxboard. Corrugated cardboard is not collected curbside but can be delivered to drop-off centers located at the Liddell and Lakewood substations. The City can also provide additional recycling bins to residents upon request.

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More detailed information on the collection aspect of the curbside recycling program is provided in Section 4.3.1, Residential Curbside Recycling Collection.

### 3.3.2 Materials Recovery Facility

Dreamsan's Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) is located at 4785 Fulton Industrial Blvd., just west of Atlanta. The WRF currently occupies 66,000 square feet and uses commingled materials processing equipment capable of handling 100 tons per day (TPD) of newsprint, plastic and metal containers, mixed paper, and glass. The facility has a 5,000-square-foot paper-processing floor dedicated to receiving and processing newsprint for direct shipment to the Southeast Paper mill in Dublin, Georgia. The processing line includes a high-capacity infeed hopper, 36-inch-wide infeed and sorting belts, disc screen, plastic perforator, overhead belt magnet, and air sorter. The system is rated at 5 tons per hour operating capacity. Materials are sorted into 10 categories as they travel down the line:

- Old corrugated cardboard at the infeed
- Trash at the disc screen
- HDPE plastic #2 natural
- HDPE plastic #2 pigmented
- Mixed paper
- PET plastic #1
- Steel and tin
- Aluminum
- Clear glass
- Amber/green glass

Dreamsan has established markets for all materials and has extended term agreements with buyers for each of these markets.

Table 3-4 lists the post-consumer use of these materials after they have been processed.

TABLE 3-4  
Post-Consumer Use of Materials Recycled By Dreamsan

Recycled Material	Post-Consumer Use
Newspaper and Corrugated Cardboard	Sent to fiber installation manufacturers for use as cellulose, or sent to paper mills in the Southeast to be re-pulped
HDPE Plastic (Pellets)	Sent to materials manufacturing facilities in North Carolina or Alabama
PET Plastic #1 (Pellets)	Sent to mills to be reused as fiber for carpet or carpet-related materials
Steel Cans	Re-bundled with other metal materials and sent to steel mills in Alabama
Aluminum Cans	Recycled into rolled aluminum and sent to aluminum can manufacturing plants in the Southeast
Glass	Recycled into fiberglass for use as insulation
Mixed Paper	Recycled into newsprint, tissue, cellulose insulation, and boxboard

Source: Dreamsan, Inc., 2004.

### 3.3.3 Drop-Off Centers (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta currently operates three drop-off centers for recyclable items. Table 3-5 provides details and accepted recyclables at the locations.

TABLE 3-5  
City of Atlanta Operated Recycling Drop-Off Centers

Location	Address	Materials Accepted
Liddell Substation	1540 Northside Drive, NW Atlanta, GA	Corrugated cardboard
Lakewood Substation	128 Claire Drive, SE Atlanta, GA	Corrugated cardboard
William B. Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant	2175 James Jackson Parkway Atlanta, GA	Fluorescent light tubes; "E-Waste," such as cell phones, computers, monitors, electronics, televisions, and stereos; chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigerants

Other privately operated drop-off centers are located in Atlanta, as shown in Table 3-6.

TABLE 3-6  
Privately Operated Recycling Drop-Off Centers in the City of Atlanta

Location	Address	Operating Hours	Materials Accepted
Atlanta Fire Station #19	1063 N. Highland Avenue Atlanta, GA 30306 (404) 853-3413	24-hour drop off center	Aluminum cans, newspaper
NAPA Auto Parts	1858 Cheshire Bridge Road Atlanta, GA 30324 (404) 873-6201	Monday - Saturday 8:00 am - 6:00 pm	Used motor oil
Davis Recycling Co.	677 Whitehall Street Atlanta, GA 30310 (404) 524-1746	Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  Saturday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Tire innertubes, NiCd batteries, electronics, aluminum cans, ferrous metals (steel, iron), non-ferrous metal  Will provide pickup service for large quantities

Source: <http://georgia.earth911.org>

### 3.3.4 Recycling in City Buildings (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta's Office of General Services collects paper and paper by-products from City Hall and other City-owned buildings. No other items are collected at this time. Paper is collected at each desk in a small recycling box. Office workers are asked to periodically empty their recycling boxes into a larger roll-off container for collection. These containers are typically located in the hallways or a central location. Recycling coordinators move the larger roll-off containers to the loading dock for emptying by a private recycling contractor.



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### 3.3.5 Recycled-Content Procurement Policy (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta has an Executive Order mandating that the City must purchase post-consumer recycled content products. The City encourages its departments to purchase environmentally friendly products and to purchase in bulk. The intent of the City's procurement policy is to stimulate recycling by providing a market for new products manufactured with recycled materials and to help reduce solid waste disposal.

### 3.3.6 City Auctions (Existing Program)

Surplus equipment from the DPW is auctioned instead of disposed. Rolling stock vehicles and heavy equipment, which are determined to be surplus or not serviceable, are sold at regularly scheduled City auctions. Auctioning used equipment and vehicles diverts these items from the landfills and promotes reuse or recycling.

### 3.3.7 Materials for the Arts Program (Existing Program)

In recent years, the City of Atlanta's Bureau of Cultural Affairs administered the Materials for the Arts (MFA) Program, a surplus recycling program that provided art materials to individual artists, art educators, non-profit cultural organizations, and social service agencies that offered arts programming. Through this program, the arts community received useful materials that were not often affordable, and donors received a tax deduction. Due to budget cuts, however, the program is no longer funded.

### 3.3.8 Commercial Multi-Family Recycling Programs (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta requires owners of any multi-family dwelling to provide containers for the collection of recyclables and to provide for their collection (Section 130-38(e) of the City of Atlanta Solid Waste Ordinance, (Code of Ordinances, City of Atlanta, Georgia, Chapter 130, Solid Waste Management; <http://www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=10376&sid=10>). Additionally, plans and specifications for new construction of multi-family housing units must include set-aside space for recycling containers on the premises (Section 130-38(f) of the City of Atlanta Solid Waste Ordinance).

Some private waste haulers provide recycling services for the multi-family complexes they serve. Items recycled by these commercial collection services include paper products, glass, plastic, metal containers, and wood pallets. The amounts of recycling tonnages collected by these companies, however, were not available.

For more detailed information on residential multi-family recycling collection, see Section 4.3.2, Multi-Family Recycling Collection.

### 3.3.9 Commercial Business Recycling Programs (Existing Program)

The City of Atlanta does not mandate recycling collection at commercially owned buildings. However, anyone applying for a non-residential building permit must submit plans providing the locations of space designated for solid waste and recycling containers (Section 130-38(f) of the City of Atlanta Solid Waste Ordinance). A few commercial recycling companies operate in or near the City of Atlanta. One major recycling company is SP Recycling Corporation (SPRC), headquartered in Atlanta. SPRC is a subsidiary of SP Newsprint Company and operates newsprint mills in Dublin, Georgia, and Newberg,

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Oregon. SP Newsprint uses old newspapers as its primary fiber source for newsprint manufacturing. SPRC procures fiber for SP Newsprint's mills, and annually collects and purchases more than one million tons of old newspapers, 225,000 tons of sawmill residual chips, and 130,000 tons of other paper grades. SPRC also operates a commercial recycling drop-off center in Forest Park, Georgia. This drop-off center accepts newspaper, cardboard, mixed paper, office paper, telephone books, magazines, aluminum and steel cans, and #1 and #2 plastics.

### **3.3.10 C&D Debris Recycling (Existing Program)**

C&D debris accounts for a significant amount of waste that enters Georgia's landfills. C&D waste is primarily wood and lumber, carpeting, aggregates, and scrap metals. The City of Atlanta and the majority of private waste haulers do not currently recycle the C&D debris they collect, but instead deliver it to C&D landfills. The City of Atlanta generated approximately 95,341 tons of C&D debris in 2003.

There are currently no dedicated C&D recycling facilities operating within Atlanta; however, Consolidated Resource Recovery, Inc. (CRR) performs some C&D recycling. CRR is a land-clearing and wood-waste-recycling company that operates in College Park, Georgia. CRR accepts yard trimmings, brush, and unwanted plant growth generated by urban landscaping. The yard trimmings are processed into products for use by homeowners, businesses, and government. CRR also recycles industrial wood waste, such as pallets, crates, scrap lumber, and railroad ties, for use as energy or landscape products.

### **3.3.11 Tire Recycling (Existing Program)**

Currently, the City takes the tires it collects from illegal dumping sites to a tire recycling vendor. In 2003, the City collected approximately 88 tons of tires for recycling. Several vendors in Georgia currently accept used tires for recycling, as shown in Table 3-7.

### **3.3.12 Yard Trimmings Recycling**

The following subsections summarize the current yard trimmings recycling programs for the City of Atlanta.

#### **3.3.12.1 Residential Curbside Collection Program (Existing Program)**

In 1996, the City of Atlanta began collecting yard trimmings separately from residential solid waste. The yard trimmings are collected bi-weekly and taken to a chipping, grinding, and staging area at the William B. Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant. The processed yard waste is then sent through a private contractor to various mills in the Southeast to be used as boiler fuel. In 2003, approximately 20,837 tons of yard trimmings were collected and processed.

For more detailed information on yard trimmings collection, see Section 4.4.1, Residential Curbside Yard Trimmings Collection.

TABLE 3-7  
Tire Recycling Companies in Georgia

Company	Mailing Address	Telephone	FAX
Recovered Materials, Inc./Diversified Industry	U.S. Hwy. 1 South Alma, GA 31510	912-632-4751	N/A
GreenMan Technologies of Georgia, Inc.	138-B Sherrel Avenue Jackson, GA 30233	770-775-6107 1-800-732-6678	770-775-4304
Quality Tire Recycling, Inc.	P.O. Box 941 Jackson, GA 30233	770-775-3304	770-775-3354
SPW Industries, Inc.	1880 Joy Lake Road Lake City, GA 30260	404-366-6002	404-363-8072
Statewide Road Construction, Inc.	220 South Gaskin Avenue Douglas, GA 31533	912-384-7723	912-383-6895
Recovery Technologies Group of Georgia, Inc.	1593 Huber Street, NW Atlanta, GA 30318	404-355-0547 1-800-249-5086	404-355-0285
CEMEX	2720 Highway 341 S. Clinchfield, GA 31013	478-987-2121	478-987-1930

### 3.3.12.2 Christmas Tree Recycling (Existing Program)

Each year the City of Atlanta holds a Christmas tree recycling event in January, called “Bring One for the Chipper.” The City partners with local agencies and retailers to encourage residents to recycle their Christmas trees after the holidays, by bringing their trees to a drop-off location where the tree is chipped into mulch. The mulch is given away free of charge to residents and is also used for public beautification projects and various wildlife habitats. Participants also received a free dogwood seedling, to complement the City of Atlanta’s greenspace initiatives. The program is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year.

### 3.3.13 White Goods Recycling (Existing Program)

Both of the transfer stations that the City is currently using for disposal of its solid waste, Welcome All Transfer Station and Lee Industrial Transfer Station, recycle collected white goods. White goods include items such as refrigerators, ranges, washers, dryers, water heaters, and dishwashers. White goods that the City collects are placed in separate bins at the transfer stations, and the transfer stations remove any refrigerants present in the white goods and then recycle the metal.

### 3.3.14 Assessment of Recycling Programs

The following subsections present the City’s assessment of the existing recycling programs in the City of Atlanta.

#### 3.3.14.1 Residential Curbside Collection Program

The City believes that the current curbside recycling program is adequate to serve the needs of the residents; however, based on input from the public at several public meetings held for the solid waste management planning process, the City will consider and evaluate the following issues:

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- Current residential curbside recycling contract, to determine if more commodities can be added
  - Feasibility of increasing the recycling bin size or providing additional bins for customers
  - Contractor to ensure timely pickup of recyclables
  - Increase in education and public awareness of recycling

#### 3.3.14.2 Drop-Off Centers

The City believes that its current drop-off recycling centers need to be improved. Based on public comments, and to reduce illegal dumping, the City will consider and evaluate the following needs:

- Since the City does not currently offer recycling collection programs for household hazardous waste, white goods (appliances), and bulky items, the City will determine if additional items can be accepted at the existing drop-off centers. Items would include paint, scrap metal, tires, and bulky waste items.
- The City may promote commercially operated drop-off centers by advertising and educating the public on the availability of these centers.
- The City may consider providing financial incentives to encourage companies to operate more recycling drop-off centers within the City.
- The City may consider providing additional drop-off centers.

#### 3.3.14.3 Other City Recycling Programs

The City will continue to provide its recycling programs in City buildings; however, recently there has been somewhat of a disconnection with the Office of General Services and SWS on ensuring a comprehensive program. Several City employees are not familiar with the recycling program, the recycling bins are not always emptied on a regular basis, and recycling data on the program are not available. The City will ensure that General Services and SWS work together on improving the program and executing it appropriately. SWS currently has a Recycling Coordinator position, which will ensure that the program is managed well, that reporting of recycling data is regularly provided to SWS, and that compliance with the program is enforced.

The City will also continue its recycled-content procurement policy and its auction program. Although the Materials for the Arts Program is no longer funded, the SWS will partner with the City's Bureau of Cultural Affairs to determine if the MFA Program can be renewed and funded.

#### 3.3.14.4 Commercial Multi-Family Recycling Programs

The City will re-evaluate the current solid waste ordinance on multi-family recycling. The current ordinance allows for enforcement of recycling collection at multi-family dwellings, but it is not being enforced. The City will also determine if it can offer recycling to the multi-family residences it serves through recycling contractors. Several citizens have expressed a desire to have landlords offer recycling at apartment, condominium, and townhouse

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complexes. The City will evaluate the logistics of recycling collection at each multi-family unit on a case-by-case basis. To ensure that waste reduction efforts are conducted at multi-family units, the City will balance enforcement of the recycling collection ordinance with education.

The City will also evaluate potential legislative actions to ensure that recycling services are provided to the multi-family residences that are serviced by private waste haulers. The City will also research ways to ensure that accurate recycling data are reported to the City, so that it can track its progress towards meeting the State's waste reduction goal.

#### **3.3.14.5 Commercial Business Recycling Programs**

Since commercial solid waste comprises a large portion of the City's total solid waste stream, the City will research ways to encourage recycling in commercial buildings and facilities. One of the first steps in assessing commercial solid waste recycling will be to gather comprehensive data and information on current recycling programs. The City will then evaluate recycling logistics at commercial buildings, and research potential initiatives to encourage recycling, such as partnering with businesses, providing technical assistance, enacting legislation, providing education and public outreach, helping to conduct waste audits, and ensuring proper reporting.

The City will also inform the public on the private recycling centers that operate within the City, and to encourage residents and businesses to partner with these recycling centers on waste reduction initiatives. The City also may utilize financial incentives for existing private recycling centers to operate more within the City.

#### **3.3.14.6 C&D Debris Recycling**

Due to the increased development within the City of Atlanta over the past decade, C&D debris has accounted for a significant amount of waste that enters Georgia's landfills. The City of Atlanta and the majority of private haulers do not currently recycle the C&D debris they collect, but instead deliver it to C&D landfills. Currently, no dedicated C&D recycling facilities operate within the City of Atlanta. Therefore, the City will evaluate the need for a C&D debris recycling initiative, including evaluating current ordinances and considering providing financial incentives for private C&D debris recycling facilities to serve the City.

#### **3.3.14.7 Tire Recycling**

The illegal dumping of tires has become a growing problem in the City of Atlanta. To address this problem, the City has recently enhanced its current illegal dumping program (discussed in Section 4.6, Illegal Dumping/Littering). The City is also evaluating the addition of drop-off centers for tires.

#### **3.3.14.8 Yard Trimmings Programs**

The City of Atlanta will continue its yard trimmings collection program and Christmas tree recycling event. The City will evaluate upgrading the current yard trimmings processing equipment at the William B. Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant and the feasibility of purchasing a new chipper and grinder.

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#### 3.3.14.9 White Goods Recycling

The City has written into its contracts with the current transfer stations to recycle white goods and remove refrigerants from them. The City will continue to offer this program. The City does not currently have recycling programs for other special items, but will evaluate the implementation of a hazardous waste collection program and future programs that provide drop-off centers, amnesty days, and other programs to recycle special wastes. Public input has also indicated a desire for the City to collect other goods for recycling.

### 3.4 Waste Reduction Alternatives for Waste-Generating Disasters

In the event of a waste generating disaster, the City of Atlanta has an Emergency Response Plan. The plan outlines the Department's responsibilities during an emergency, along with the level of interaction with other agencies. The plan establishes emergency communication and protocol. Emergencies that the plan covers include:

- Inclement weather
- Snow and ice removal
- Flooding
- Downed trees resulting from strong winds
- Water- and sewer-main breaks in the public ROW
- Barricade placement for vehicular and pedestrian traffic control
- Detour signage and barricades to cordon off hazardous areas
- Debris removal
- Repairs to traffic signals, signs, sidewalks, and streets
- Homeland security

To handle the reduction (recycling) of significant increases in volumes of waste that occur as a result of natural disasters such as hurricanes or ice storms, the City has specified in its contract with its curbside recycling company, Dreamsans, Inc., that the company will collect all recyclables at the curbside, regardless of size. For specific recyclables, the City uses another contractor for special pickups and also will use drop-off centers. Additionally, the City will consider paying its workers overtime and using its own equipment to support the collection of additional recyclables. The City may use other private recycling companies to handle the increased volume in recycling needs, and may use its own solid waste collection vehicles to transport recyclables to private material recovery facilities in metro Atlanta. The City anticipates that C&D materials (such as lumber, roofing materials, carpeting, and concrete) and yard trimmings would be the types of recyclable materials to result from a waste-generating disaster.

In the unlikely event of an increase in the generation of yard trimmings, the City has the following waste reduction alternatives in place:

- Use the City's adequate space to stockpile yard trimmings.
- Ship processed yard trimmings directly to reuse facilities, instead of using the current vendor.

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- Contract out chipping and grinding if the City's equipment fails.
  - Pay workers overtime to provide additional collection.
  - Use spare equipment and fleet vehicles to continue collection, and if equipment or vehicles break down, use emergency funds to purchase replacements.

Section 4.7, Contingency Strategies, provides more detail on emergency collection procedures in the event of a waste-generating disaster or interruption of primary collection efforts.

## 3.5 Needs and Goals

To meet the State of Georgia's 25 percent per-capita reduction rate of the amount of solid waste being received at disposal facilities, the City has proposed the following new programs to help achieve the City's 10-year planning goals as well as the State's solid waste reduction goal. These programs have been categorized as either source reduction, reuse/recovery, recycling, or special items programs.

### 3.5.1 Waste Reduction Programs

The following new waste reduction programs will apply the City's plans for expanding its current educational program and focus on waste reduction in all facets of the program. Source reduction kits, like reusable shopping bags, backyard composting kits, junk mail termination kits, and others, will be expanded or created, and made available free of charge on request. Outreach programs to communities and schools will include source reduction concepts. The City will also evaluate the use of financial incentives, which may assist both residents and businesses in the City in reducing waste.

#### 3.5.1.1 Pay-As-You-Throw (New Program)

The City will evaluate the feasibility of implementing a Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) program for the City's residents. A PAYT system may help reduce the amount of waste being disposed at landfills, and this program has significant public support. A PAYT system may help lower operational costs, increase recycling efforts, and promote greater awareness of solid waste disposal costs.

PAYT programs (also known as unit pricing or variable-rate pricing) charges residents for the garbage collection based on the volume. PAYT programs create a direct economic incentive to recycle.

Traditionally in the City of Atlanta, residents pay for waste collection and disposal through annual fixed fees, regardless of the volume generated. PAYT breaks from tradition and treats waste collection and disposal services like electricity, gas, and other utilities. Residents pay a variable rate depending upon the amount of service they use. This provides a financial incentive for residents to reduce waste, and can lead to lower transportation and disposal costs for the City.

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Several variations of a PAYT collection system exist, including a prepaid bag or sticker system, a single or variable container subscription service, weigh at the truck or curb system, or a hybrid system.

### *Potential Obstacles and Problems with PAYT Systems*

If the City implements a PAYT system, potential obstacles and problems may have to be overcome. These include:

- Illegal burning of waste
- Illegal dumping of waste, in non-approved ways or locations
- Overfill of curbside containers, causing refuse to spill onto streets, yards, and other locations
- Occasional overfills from holidays or parties, which can be remedied by a set of free passes offered each year by the City
- Illegal disposing of excess trash in other neighbors' trash cans
- Initial perceptions that the switch to PAYT pricing is simply an attempt to raise garbage rates
- Changes to statutes, ordinances, or contracts with private entities that provide solid waste collection, which may be necessary before volume-based rates can be implemented
- Degree of urbanization of a community, its surrounding area, and the strength of the local recycling markets
- Financial hardships on poor and fixed-income citizens, especially in light of fees and cost-based rates charged for other utility services, such as water and wastewater. Some communities have implemented special "lifeline" rates to reduce the financial impact on these groups.
- Potential resistance to increased enforcement efforts to ensure a fully functioning PAYT system.

The key to overcoming these and other obstacles is for the City to carefully design a PAYT system and public education campaign. Such a campaign will inform and educate residents well in advance about the costs of existing waste management practices, address specific community needs and concerns, and ensure compliance with the system.

#### **3.5.1.2 Junk Mail Reduction (New Program)**

To reduce waste, meet the State's reduction goal, and address public comments on reducing junk mail, the City will develop a junk mail termination kit, which gives details on how residents can remove their names and addresses from unwanted mailing and telephone lists. The kit will be provided on the City's website and made available free of charge by request. The kit will include opt-out toll-free phone numbers, websites, and pre-addressed postcards to send to various mailing distribution houses. The kit will also provide tips to prevent being placed on future mailing lists.



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The junk mail termination kit will be available at City offices/City Hall, libraries, neighborhood associations, and other outlets. The program will be advertised through flyers, brochures, and other awareness materials. This source reduction program will help the City achieve goals by reducing the production of junk mail.

#### **3.5.1.3 Financial Incentives (New Program)**

The City needs to increase recycling and waste reduction efforts to meet the State's waste reduction goal and to address the public's desire for more recycling opportunities and initiatives. The City may use financial incentives, such as investment tax credits, to promote waste reduction and recycling activities. Tax credits may be given to businesses for the purchase of capital machinery or facilities that decrease the overall amount of waste generated, increase recycling levels, or encourage secondary materials processing. Under this type of program, the government allows businesses to reduce the amount of its tax liability in some proportion to the cost of capital expenditures for the approved activities.

Several states already use some form of tax credits for the reduction, reuse, or recycling of solid waste. In Arkansas, taxpayers receive an income tax credit for the purchase and installation of equipment used exclusively for reduction, reuse, or recycling. Oregon offers a Business Energy Tax Credit which allows companies a tax write-off on 35 percent of the cost of equipment used solely for recycling. The City of Camarillo, through the California Franchise Tax Board, offers a 6 percent tax credit for qualified property used in recycling. The credit can also be claimed for the purchase of manufacturing equipment and leased equipment. Oklahoma offers companies a one-time income tax credit for investing in new facilities that recycle particular industrial wastes. In Florida, tax incentives are provided for the transport of recyclable materials and products. This incentive encourages affordable transportation of recyclable goods from collection points to processing sites. Financial incentives (e.g., property tax credits) may also be offered to residents in a community that agrees to house a solid waste handling or recycling facility.

In addition to state initiatives, many communities have used financial incentives to encourage waste reduction and recycling of solid waste material. These options range from credits on the purchase of equipment to property tax credits on building recycling facilities. The City will evaluate financial incentives to determine which options would best serve the City.

### **3.5.2 Reuse/Recovery Programs**

This subsection presents new reuse/recovery programs that will help the City meet its waste reduction goals and the State's 25 percent per capita reduction rate.

#### **3.5.2.1 Don't Dispose – Donate (New Program)**

Although various organizations accept tax-deductible reusable items, Atlanta underutilizes them. The City will develop a "Don't Dispose – Donate" program, which will unite these organizations with the public to promote reuse. As part of the program, the City will compile a current, centralized, database of for-profit and non-profit organizations within Atlanta that accept reusable items, and compile information on the following:

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- Items they accept
  - Whether the organization offers a tax-deductible receipt
  - Drop-off locations and hours
  - Whether the organization picks up items from the resident's dwelling

The City will post the database information on its website and will provide a printed copy of the listing free of charge on request. Advertising will be done through flyers, brochures, and other awareness handouts.

#### **3.5.2.2 Metro Atlanta Waste Exchange (New Program)**

The City of Atlanta currently underutilizes waste exchanges. Waste exchange services reduce waste being disposed to a landfill by allowing companies and individuals to exchange, recycle, or reuse items. The City will consider sponsoring a waste exchange program with institutional departments in metro Atlanta. This program would allow local governments and institutions (such as schools) to exchange reusable items such as furniture, office items, equipment, vehicles, and other items that would otherwise be disposed of in landfills. As appropriate logistically, private-sector groups could be added. The City would develop a catalog, available in printed copy by request and on the City's website, listing wanted or available reusable items. Vendors would be listed confidentially, and the City would only act as a liaison in coordinating the exchange of items. The City will initially propose a pilot program and research and evaluate the logistics of the program. A waste exchange helps meet waste reduction goals by reusing or recycling items that would otherwise be disposed of. It also helps institutions that need equipment, but lack funds for new items, to obtain working, reusable equipment.

### **3.5.3 Recycling Programs**

This subsection presents new recycling programs or enhancements to existing programs that will help the City meet its waste reduction goals and the State's 25 percent per capita reduction rate.

#### **3.5.3.1 Curbside Collection Program (Enhanced Program)**

To move toward a higher diversion of residential waste and ensure that recycling services meet residents' needs (based on public input as listed in Section 3.3.14.1, Residential Curbside Collection Program), the City will review the current residential curbside recycling contract to determine if opportunities for additional commodities can be added to the curbside recycling collection program. The City will also examine the feasibility of increasing the current recycling bin size.

To continue to provide quality recycling to residential customers, the City will review the contract regularly to ensure that the contractor provides timely pickup of recyclables and notifies residents of improper recycling set-outs, and will increase education and public awareness of recycling to residents, schools, and community groups. More information on education and public awareness programs on recycling is provided in Section 7, Education and Public Involvement Element.

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### 3.5.3.2 Drop-Off Centers (Enhanced Program)

The City's current drop-off centers do not adequately address the public needs nor help the City meet the State's waste reduction goal. Therefore, the City will expand its existing recycling drop-off centers or locate additional convenience centers. The City currently accepts fluorescent tubes, "E-waste," refrigerants, and cardboard. The City will determine if these drop-off centers can be expanded to accept additional items such as household hazardous waste (including paint and solvents), white goods, household batteries, scrap metal, tires, bulky waste items (such as furniture), and many other items. Expanded drop-off centers will help the City reduce waste going to landfills, prevent illegal dumping, aid in community cleanup and recycling efforts, and increase overall public awareness of solid waste management. Once the expanded drop-off centers are fully operational, the City will advertise and inform the public on their availability.

The City also will promote commercially operated drop-off centers through advertisement and public awareness. The City will evaluate potential financial incentives for companies to operate more recycling drop-off centers. Some incentives may include property tax credits on the location of operation or for the purchase of collection equipment (such as roll-off bins).

The expanded drop-off centers may also work in conjunction with a PAYT system. For white goods and bulky items, residents would have three options under the PAYT system:

- Request for the City to pick up the items, and pay an additional charge.
- Deliver reusable items to a charity organization and receive a tax deduction.
- Deliver the items to the City's expanded drop-off centers, without charge.

These options would allow the City to meet its waste reduction goals and also reduce illegal dumping.

### 3.5.3.3 City and Commercial Multi-Family Recycling (Enhanced Program)

The City will re-evaluate the current solid waste ordinance on multi-family recycling, to ensure that recycling collection at multi-family dwellings is enforced. Several citizens have complained about a lack of recycling at their apartment, condominium, and townhouse complexes. The City will work with the owners, to balance enforcement of recycling collection with education on waste reduction efforts at multi-family units. The City also will evaluate the logistics, convenience, and ease of recycling at multi-family complexes, since recyclable materials at multi-family dwellings cannot be collected easily at the curbside.

The City will determine if it can offer recycling to the multi-family residences it serves, through the use of recycling contractors, much like the recycling services provided to single-family residences. The City will evaluate potential legislative actions to ensure that private waste haulers offer recycling options to the multi-family residences they serve. The City will also research franchising, business licensing, and other legislative techniques for recycling contractors to serve multi-family residences. The City will also research potential reporting mechanisms, so that the City can track its progress towards meeting the State's waste reduction goal.

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#### 3.5.3.4 Commercial Business Recycling (Enhanced Program)

In 2003, Atlanta businesses generated approximately 359,958 tons of commercial waste that went to landfills. It is not known fully how many commercial businesses in Atlanta recycle their solid wastes. The City's Commercial Solid Waste Assessment Report found that 16 of 23 businesses surveyed managed recyclable materials. Because commercial waste comprises a large portion of the City's waste, commercial recycling initiatives will be evaluated as a means to achieve the State's waste reduction goal. Due to the lack of data and no reporting mechanism for the amount of materials recycled by a commercial business, it is unknown as to what extent the City can implement commercial recycling initiatives. Therefore, the City will evaluate ways to obtain accurate commercial recycling data, and once data are gathered, will determine initiatives to encourage recycling at commercial buildings. Initiatives may include evaluating recycling logistics at commercial buildings, researching educational and public outreach methods, establishing partnerships, providing technical assistance, offering financial incentives, and enacting legislative actions. The City will also research potential reporting mechanisms, so that the City can ensure it meets the State's waste reduction goal.

The City will also inform the public on the private recycling centers that operate within the City, and to encourage residents and businesses to partner with these recycling centers on waste reduction initiatives. The City also may utilize financial incentives for existing private recycling centers to operate more within the City.

#### 3.5.3.5 Sales Tax Incentives (New Program)

One of the widespread uses of product value taxes is the deposit-refund system for beverage container recovery. Typically referred to as "bottle bills," these programs offer an incentive for users to recycle, by charging a small fee on the purchase price, which is not returned to the user until the material is returned for recycling.

Today, 10 states (Oregon, Vermont, Maine, Michigan, Iowa, Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New York, and California) have a bottle bill requiring refundable deposits on certain beverage containers. The principal purpose behind this program is reducing litter, but it is tied directly to the facilitation of recycling. Unclaimed monies can be used to support the following activities:

- Capital assistance grants
- Litter control
- Recycling promotion and education
- Technical assistance
- Research and development
- Administration

Recycling fees may be collected on recyclable items besides beverage containers. The State of California collects tire fees and electronic waste recycling fees from consumers at the time of the retail sale or lease. Funds established through these programs are then used to help fund the disposal, recovery, processing, or recycling of these materials.

The City of Atlanta does not currently provide product value tax incentives on recyclable items. Value tax incentives are typically provided on a statewide basis. Therefore, the City

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will evaluate any statewide efforts on value tax incentives that reduce solid waste, and consider offering support and promotion on approved incentives.

#### 3.5.3.6 C&D Recycling (New Program)

C&D debris accounts for a significant amount of waste that enters Georgia's landfills. A recent survey of landfills in the state determined that almost 12 percent of the waste entering the landfills was C&D debris. C&D waste is primarily wood and lumber, aggregates, carpet, and scrap metals. C&D debris disposal also contributed over 95,000 tons to the City's waste stream in 2003, and most likely impacted the City's 11 percent per capita reduction.

Due to the increased development within Atlanta over the past decade, the City will consider implementing a C&D debris recycling program. This program will involve two components: (1) zoning and building code regulations to mandate C&D recycling, and (2) financial incentives for businesses to build and operate a C&D recycling facility that serves Atlanta.

##### *Zoning and Building Code Legislation for C&D Recycling*

Zoning and building code modifications have become increasingly popular for municipalities as they realize their lack of control over who recycles and how materials are disposed. Without appropriate building codes, construction contractors are often free to dispose of C&D materials without considering recycling options.

By modifying zoning and building codes, a local government can establish control of C&D waste, particularly to prevent disposal, and require recycling of wastes generated on a construction site. C&D waste management parameters that can be established by modified zoning and building codes may include the following requirements:

- Applicants must submit a recycling plan to the Department of Planning and Community Development prior to permit approvals and start of construction.
- Applicants must calculate a project recycling rate that commits them to recycle a certain percentage of the wastes generated during construction.
- Certain construction materials must be separated for recycling, and separate recycling containers must be placed throughout the construction area so that proper separation of recyclables is possible.

The City will evaluate the current zoning and building codes to determine whether modifications to include waste reduction of C&D waste can be implemented.

##### *Financial Incentives for C&D Recycling Facilities*

The City may implement numerous financial incentive options to encourage C&D debris recycling facilities to build, operate, and serve the City of Atlanta. Options may involve investment tax credits to businesses for the purchase of machinery and equipment that reduces, reuses, or recycles C&D debris. Property tax credits may be offered to allow C&D facilities to build and operate within the City. The City may also subsidize the development of a recycling facility or incorporate it into an established recycling enterprise zone.

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C&D recycling facilities are typically located on several acres and require heavy equipment for handling and processing waste, as well as space for storage of processed material. Processing equipment typically includes forklift trucks, crushers, and shaker screens.

Although no C&D recycling facilities are located in Atlanta, a few facilities are active in Georgia. Atlas Waste and Recycling Systems operates a C&D processing facility in Savannah that accepts concrete, wood, metal, and other building waste. Georgia Mountain Grinding in Blairsville accepts yard trimmings, pallets, logs, sheetrock, block, brick, concrete, shingles, rock, and asphalt.

### ***C&D Recycling Facilities***

C&D recycling facilities are typically located on several acres and require heavy equipment for handling and processing waste, as well as space for storage of processed material. Processing equipment typically includes forklift trucks, crushers, and shaker screens. No C&D recycling facilities are currently operating within the City of Atlanta.

Advantages of C&D recycling facilities include:

- Reduction in the amount C&D waste requiring disposal (potentially over 95,000 tons per year)
- Recovery of material for recycling/reuse and potential revenues.

Disadvantages include:

- Siting a processing facility
- Potential difficulty in marketing recovered materials.

A C&D waste processing facility would consist of an open site with a small, permanent building for the storage of miscellaneous materials, such as tools and maintenance equipment. A C&D recycling site would require about 5 to 10 acres on land zoned for industrial use, or commercial land zoned for heavy equipment use. The majority of the site would be used for incoming material and short-term product storage. Nearly 70 to 90 percent of the waste received at a C&D recycling facility can be recycled, and includes ferrous metals, wood, aggregate materials, and soil. Typical environmental impacts from a C&D recycling facility would be low and would be related to stormwater runoff, dust, and noise.

### **3.5.3.7 Tire Recycling (Enhanced Program)**

The illegal dumping of tires is a growing problem in the City of Atlanta. Therefore, the City will evaluate adding or enhancing existing drop-off centers to accept used tires, which will be sent to a tire recycling vendor.

### **3.5.3.8 Conversion of Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant to Environmental Education Center and Park (New Program)**

The City will conduct a feasibility study on converting the existing William B. Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant into an Environmental Education Center and Greenspace Park. The Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant is currently a yard trimmings processing area that grinds, chips, and stores yard trimmings, collected from residents, for delivery to

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various mills in the Southeast. The mills use the processed yard trimmings as boiler fuel and energy recovery.

The City may bring together the Hartsfield Solid Waste Reduction Plant, the local community, the City of Atlanta's Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, and others to purchase an adjacent property to develop as greenspace and a park. The park would house an environmental education facility that provides meeting space, classrooms, museums, and demonstration areas for environmental education. Topics would include solid waste reduction and recycling, environmental sustainability, clean water, and clean air issues. Other City departments, such as the Department of Watershed Management, the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, and the Department of Planning and Community Development, also could use the educational center. Atlanta Public Schools and community groups could use the facility for educational field trips. The park and greenspace area, for use by the surrounding neighborhoods, would include park and playground equipment manufactured from recycled materials, such as tires and building materials. The yard trimmings processing area would be upgraded and enhanced with state-of-the-art equipment, and educational tours would be provided in conjunction with the education center.

#### **3.5.3.9 Backyard Composting (Enhanced Program)**

In the past, the City has provided backyard composting kits to residents and has assisted community gardening centers with composting. The City will expand this program with increased educational and public awareness efforts. Informational and other materials to assist in starting a composting program will be made available free of charge. Backyard or home composting allows individual residents to reduce their yard and food wastes by decomposing the waste into material for use as a soil conditioner for garden and landscaping needs.

The City will promote backyard composting in its educational outreach programs, and will provide frequently asked questions (FAQs), flyers and brochures, technical assistance, and detailed information on its website on home composting.

#### **3.5.3.10 Yard Trimmings Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) Program (New Program)**

A PAYT system may also be extended to yard trimmings collection. The City will evaluate the feasibility of providing variable rate fees for the collection and processing of yard trimmings. An example of a PAYT option for yard trimmings would involve requiring residents to purchase paper bags that are only sanctioned by the City. The cost of the paper bags would help pay for the collection and processing of the yard trimmings. The City can also arrange for local distributors (e.g., grocery and hardware stores) to sell the City-sanctioned bags.

#### **3.5.3.11 Amnesty Days and Household Hazardous Waste Events (New Program)**

Since the City of Atlanta currently does not collect household hazardous waste, it plans to hold two household hazardous waste collection events a year. The events would be held at a location with several bins for the collection of wastes such as paint, tires, scrap metal, and solvents. The City would ensure that material recyclers were contracted to accept and collect these items. The City will also evaluate hosting Amnesty Days, where residents can take any type of waste from their households to drop-off centers free of charge. These events will help the City to meet its waste reduction goals and also reduce illegal dumping.

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